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REVIEWS

The Child That Toileth Not. By THOMAS ROBINSON DAWLEY.
New York: The Gracia Publishing Co. Pp. 490.

This book is not entitled to scientific recognition within the field of labor problems. It is an unjustifiable attack upon recent child labor legislation, and upon the National Child Labor Committee. It is written by one severely biased because of unpleasant personal relations at Washington, and voices the ideas of the vested cotton interests of the South. Its chief purpose seems to be to create public opinion in favor of child labor for cotton mills, and to thwart governmental action which may result in further prohibition of child labor. The argument is illogical and weak. Conclusions are reached without proof and from premises which either assume the conclusions desired or are not directly pertinent to them.

Mr. Dawley would have us believe that child labor is beneficial and necessary, and that it should be encouraged because cotton mills pay taxes to pave streets and build schoolhouses; because they establish certain forms of welfare work; and because of their general redemptive and socializing influence. He would have us remember that the children in the mills say that they like their work; that there are kindergartens, sewing clubs, etc., under the auspices of the mill; that the superintendents are on such friendly terms with some of the young people that they give them rides in their autos; and that the management, because it cannot bear to see the people idle, gives them work even when the market is dull and the product has to be put in storage waiting better times.

Too much emphasis is thus placed upon a variety of data which are not deserving of a very prominent place in a fair consideration of the child-labor problem of the South, and almost nothing is said about other data which are vastly more important, namely, data which result from a really careful study of exact labor conditions in the light of our best standards. The book is conspicuous for what it omits.

The greatest value of this volume lies outside the field of labor. It is interesting and readable because of its narrative and descriptive style, and its close touch with human life. It is also a valuable contribution of detailed information upon the social life of the mountaineers.

ROY WILLIAM FOLEY

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO